

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) The share of total agricultural exports (including marine products, tea, coffee, castor oil and cotton) during the first three years of the IXth Five Year Plan to that of country's total exports were as under:-

Export of Agricultural Products

Year	Country's total Exports (Rs. in Crores)	Agricultural Export (Rs. in Crores)	% share of Agricultural Exports against Country's total exports
1997-98	130101	24626	18.93
1998-99	139752	28500	20.39
1999-2000	162925	23823	14.62

SOURCE : DGCI&S

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) The major non tariff barriers imposed by the developed countries are higher levels of sanitary and phytosanitary measures, the quality standards on factors like pesticide residue, document processing, pre-shipment inspection formalities, pest risk analysis, quarantine related problems, quota restriction, sampling procedure, etc. These non tariff barriers have affected our exports of fruits and vegetables, floriculture items, mushroom, spices peanuts, nuts, cereal and cereal products, meat and milk products, poultry products, organic products etc. to the developed countries.

Demand for 100 per cent duty on Rubber Imports

2583. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state what are the details of Government's response to the demands of 100 per cent duty on rubber imports to save the domestic rubber growers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): The import duty on Natural Rubber is 25% which is also the WTO bound rate of duty. Any further increase in import

duty on Natural Rubber will be incompatible with WTO regulations. However, the Govt. has filed its negotiating proposals with the WTO for inclusion of rubber in the rationalisation of product coverage under the Agreement on Agriculture.

Applications Cleared by FIPB

2584. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 33 applications for investment by foreign firms recommended by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board, have been cleared by the Ministry very recently;

(b) if so, the total amount and investment expected; and

(c) whether the backward States like Bihar will be benefited from such foreign investment and if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) and (b) A total number of 33 proposals envisaging total FDI of Rs. 362 crore for different States and Union Territories, covering various sectors including manufacture of chemicals, textile processing, laminated flooring material and accessories, processed food, automobile components, scientific equipment, electronics, information technology and ISP, software development and consultancy, telecommunications and data systems, have been cleared recently by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) in accordance with the prevailing FDI Policy and in consultation with concerned administrative Ministries/Departments.

(c) The investment decisions are dependent upon the commercial judgement of the investors which depends on the availability of adequate and dependable infrastructure facilities such as power, developed land, etc., and incentives and subsidies provided by State Governments for attracting investment into the States and Union Territories.

Emerging Threat to Indian Leather Industry

2585. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that technical specifications on product quality are fast emerging as a threat to the \$ 2 billion Indian Leather Industry;